

Pertussis

Background. Pertussis is a highly communicable, vaccine-preventable disease that lasts for many weeks and is typically manifested in children with paroxysmal spasms of severe coughing, whooping, and post-tussive vomiting.[^] Complications are most common among infants and young children and include hypoxia, apnea, pneumonia, seizures, encephalopathy, and malnutrition. Young children can die from pertussis. Most deaths occur among unvaccinated children or children too young to be vaccinated. Pertussis is an endemic illness. In the United States epidemics occur every 3-5 years.

[^] CDC > Division of Bacterial and Mycotic Diseases > Disease Information. Health Topics A to Z.

Reporting. In Missouri, pertussis has been a reportable disease for over ten years. Cases are reported to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) through the Missouri Health Surveillance Information System (MOHSIS). Based on a combination of clinical and laboratory criteria, cases are assigned a status of confirmed, probable, suspect, etc. Only confirmed and probable cases are presented here.

Nationally, pertussis is a reportable disease. Cases are reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS). NNDSS data for 2003 was not available at the time of analysis.

